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Committees
Economic Development, Small
Business and Regulatory Reform VC
Families and Human Services VC
Government Operations
Health Policy

The Jacobs Report

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TASK FORCE TO HOLD INSURANCE REFORM HEARINGS ACROSS MICHIGAN

This week in Lansing, the Senate Democratic Caucus announced the formation of its Consumer Protection Task Force. Chaired by senators Gilda Z. Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods) and Martha G. Scott (D-Highland Park), the task force will hold hearings across the state to take testimony on insurance reform.

"Insurance reform is a top priority for our caucus," Sen. Jacobs said. "From the large volume of constituent calls to our caucus, it is clear that Michigan citizens are looking for answers to questionable rates and practices promulgated by the insurance industry. For some folks, the issue is auto insurance related. For others, it's home and health insurance. We want to hear from all these concerned people. Their input is essential to the development of legislation to address these issues."

Sen. Scott said, "The citizens of Detroit have been dealing with redlining for far too long. We understand that this issue is not exclusively a problem plaguing the city but many communities across the state. Now is the time to work with our new insurance commissioner to resolve redlining and other long-standing insurance problems and create a fair and level playing field for everyone in Michigan."

Other members of the Senate Democratic Caucus Task Force on Consumer Protection include Sen. Burton Leland (D-Detroit), Sen. Dennis Olshove (D-Warren), and Sen. Samuel "Buzz" Thomas (D-Detroit).

The task force's first hearing is scheduled to begin at 5:30 p.m., Mon., July 14 at the St. John NE Community Hospital located at 4777 Outer Drive in Detroit. Other hearings are scheduled in Muskegon and Saginaw for later this summer. The task force will issue a report on its findings this fall. For those unable to attend the hearings, the task force has established an online information center to help interested parties learn more about the task force's mission and submit specific questions and concerns to task force members.

NATIONAL DO NOT CALL REGISTRY NOW OPEN

The National Do Not Call Registry is open for business, putting consumers in charge of the telemarketing

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calls they get at home. The Federal Government created the national registry to make it easier and more efficient for people to prevent unwanted telemarketing sales calls. Interested parties should register online at DONOTCALL.GOV or call toll-free, 1-888-382-1222 (TTY 1-866-290-4236), from the number to be registered. Registration is free.

The Federal Trade Commission, the Federal Communications Commission, and the states will begin enforcing the National Do Not Call Registry on Oct. 1, 2003. That's when consumers who put their numbers on the registry by August 31, 2003 will notice a downturn in the number of telemarketing calls received. Placing a number on the National Do Not Call Registry will stop most, but not all, telemarketing calls.

STATE OUTLINES ASH BORER RESPONSE

This week, Michigan officials provided an update on the state's plans for the next six months of the eradication efforts to control Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), the destructive insect killing millions of ash trees in Southeast Michigan.

Plans were cooperatively developed by the state's Emerald Ash Borer Task Force, which is comprised of the Michigan Departments of Agriculture (MDA) and Natural Resources (DNR), Michigan State University (MSU) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and Forest Service.

"The state's response to this pest must be thoughtful, scientific and aggressive," MDA Director Dan WYANT said. "Task force efforts over the next six months will be critical in setting the tone for the many years of hard work that lie ahead to successfully defeat the Emerald Ash Borer."

"Emerald Ash Borer has the potential to destroy Michigan's ash trees," DNR Director K.L. COOL said. "The statewide EAB Task Force brings together a diverse group with a shared commitment to protecting our resources. But our ultimate success against EAB will require the help and awareness of every Michigan resident and visitor."

The first management zone is the "core" zone, which is the known-infested area. It includes all of Oakland County except Addison and Leonard.

State Senator Gilda Jacobs represents the 14th Senate District, which includes Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Ferndale, Franklin, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak Township, Southfield, and Southfield Township. She is the Minority Vice Chair of the Families & Human Services Committee and the Economic Development, Small Business & Regulatory Reform Committee. She also serves on the Government Operations and Health Policy Committees.

Constituents of the 14th District may contact Senator Jacobs at sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov or toll-free at 1-888-937-4453.

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